

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT STATE AGENCIES, USING EXISTING RESOURCES, WORK WITH OTHER AGENCIES, INDIAN NATIONS, TRIBES AND PUEBLOS AND PRIVATE GROUPS TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT KEY WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.

WHEREAS, for thousands of years migrating wildlife have been using paths called wildlife corridors to find food, water, shelter and space and to mate or to change locations as the seasons or climate changed; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is rich in biodiversity and ranks fourth highest in the United States in native species richness; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has six of the seven life zones identified by botanist Clinton H. Merriam based on temperature and elevation, with tremendous diversity; and

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1           WHEREAS, wildlife provide us with food, medicine, insect  
2 control, pollination and other beneficial services and help the  
3 state stay beautiful and colorful; and

4           WHEREAS, tourists come to New Mexico for wildlife  
5 recreational opportunities, such as photography, hunting and  
6 fishing, contributing billions of dollars annually to the  
7 state's economy; and

8           WHEREAS, protecting precious wildlife is in the best  
9 interest of all present and future New Mexicans and can stand  
10 as an example for conservation efforts nationwide; and

11           WHEREAS, land use changes and climate changes are  
12 challenges to wildlife and their migration paths and require  
13 proactive conservation efforts; and

14           WHEREAS, animals that move across roads not only risk  
15 injury and death to themselves, but they also cause property  
16 damage to vehicles and injury and death to people; and

17           WHEREAS, House Joint Memorial 3 of the forty-sixth  
18 legislature, first session, was passed in 2003, and the  
19 memorial requests state agencies to take action to reduce  
20 wildlife-vehicle collisions; and

21           WHEREAS, wildlife corridors in selected areas of New  
22 Mexico have already decreased wildlife-vehicle collisions; and

23           WHEREAS, the mapping of wildlife corridors will help  
24 improve the planning of development and roads; and

25           WHEREAS, the western governors' association unanimously

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1 passed a resolution that urges states to identify key wildlife  
2 corridors and crucial habitats in the west; and

3 WHEREAS, the comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy  
4 for New Mexico has identified several gaps in existing data,  
5 including the location of wildlife corridors; and

6 WHEREAS, state law provides opportunities for private  
7 landowners to create conservation easements on their property  
8 to protect the natural or open space values of the land, which  
9 can help connect wildlife habitats; and

10 WHEREAS, wildlife is important to the heritage of New  
11 Mexico, and all state agencies need to find common ground to  
12 help protect wildlife corridors;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
14 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize the importance of  
15 wildlife corridors to the health of New Mexico's wildlife; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies, using existing  
17 resources, and by September 1, 2009, work together with other  
18 agencies, Indian nations, tribes and pueblos and private  
19 groups, in a workshop led by the energy, minerals and natural  
20 resources department, to share the information gathered by the  
21 western wildlife habitat council of the western governors'  
22 association to identify and map wildlife corridors and crucial  
23 habitats and to identify funding needs and future data and  
24 mapping needs; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies consider

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1 existing and future data about wildlife corridors in their  
2 planning decisions; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies encourage  
4 citizen-scientists to help with data collection about wildlife;  
5 and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
7 transmitted to the office of the governor, the commissioner of  
8 public lands, the department of environment, the New Mexico  
9 department of agriculture, the economic development department,  
10 the energy, minerals and natural resources department, the  
11 department of game and fish, the department of public safety,  
12 the department of transportation, the office of the state  
13 engineer, the New Mexico association of counties and the New  
14 Mexico municipal league.